

IN THE CLAIMS:

Before claim 1, please delete the word "Claims" and substitute the following:

What is claimed is:

Please cancel claims 1-24, and add the following new claims 25-48:

1-24. (Canceled)

25. A spacer for holding a number of elongated fuel rods intended to be located in a nuclear plant, said spacer comprising:

a spacer enclosing a number of cells, each having a longitudinal axis and arranged to receive a fuel rod in such a way that the fuel rod extends substantially parallel with the longitudinal axis,

each cell being formed by a sleeve-like member, and

each sleeve-like member being manufactured from a sheet-shaped material that is bent to the sleeve-like shape, and wherein

the sheet-shaped material before said bending has a first connection portion in the proximity of a first end of the sheet-shaped material and a second connection portion in the proximity of a second end of the sheet-shaped material, wherein the first end overlaps the second end of the sleeve-like member after said bending.

26. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the first connection portion and the second connection portion are permanently connected to each other by means of at least one weld joint.

27. A spacer according to claim 26, wherein said weld joint includes a spot weld.

28. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the nuclear plant is arranged to permit recirculation of a coolant flow and wherein the spacer is arranged to be located in the coolant flow, the spacer including at least one vane for influencing the coolant flow.

29. A spacer according to claim 28, wherein said vane is formed by a portion of the material, which extends from the first connection portion.

30. A spacer according to claim 28, wherein said vane is inclined in relation to the longitudinal axis.

31. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member has a material thickness, which is less than about 0.24 mm.
32. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member has a material thickness, which is less than or equal to about 0.20 mm.
33. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member has a material thickness, which is less than or equal to about 0.18 mm.
34. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member has an upper edge and a lower edge.
35. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member includes a number of ridges, which project inwardly towards the longitudinal axis and extend substantially in parallel with the longitudinal axis for abutment to the fuel rod to be received in the cell.
36. A spacer according to claim 34, wherein said ridges extend from the upper edge to the lower edge.
37. A spacer according to claim 35, wherein each sleeve-like member includes at least four of said ridges.
38. A spacer according to claim 34, wherein the lower edge, seen transversely to the longitudinal axis, has a wave-like shape with wave peaks and wave valleys and that the upper edge, seen transversely to the longitudinal axis, has a wave-like shape with wave peaks and wave valleys.
39. A spacer according to claim 38, wherein said wave peaks are aligned with a respective one of said ridges, wherein said wave valleys are located between two adjacent ones of said ridges.
40. A spacer according to claim 38, wherein the sleeve-like members abut each other in the spacer along a connection area extending in parallel to the longitudinal axis between one of said wave valleys of the upper edge and one of said wave valleys of the lower edge.
41. A spacer according to claim 40, wherein the sleeve-like members are permanently connected to each other by means of weld joints.
42. A spacer according to claim 40, wherein said weld joint includes an edged weld at said connection area at least one of the upper edge and the lower edge.

43. A spacer according to claim 25, wherein the sleeve-like member seen in the direction of the longitudinal axis has four substantially orthogonal long sides.
44. A spacer according to claim 35, wherein each long side includes one of said ridges.
45. A spacer according to claim 28, wherein said vane extends outwardly from one of said long sides.
46. A spacer according to claim 43, wherein the sleeve-like member seen in the direction of the longitudinal axis has four substantially orthogonal short sides, wherein each short side connects two of said of long sides.
47. A spacer according to claim 38, wherein each short side includes with a portion of one of said wave valleys of the upper edge and a portion of one said wave valleys of the lower edge .
48. A fuel unit for a nuclear plant comprising:  
a number of elongated fuel rods,  
s number of spacers for holding the fuel rods, wherein  
the spacers enclosing a number of cells, each having a longitudinal axis and being  
arranged to receive one of said fuel rods in such a way that the fuel rod extends in parallel to  
the longitudinal axis,  
each cell being formed by a sleeve-like member, and  
substantially each sleeve-like member being manufactured from a sheet-shaped material bent  
to the sleeve-like shape from the sheet-shaped material before said bending having a first  
connection portion in the proximity of the a first end of the sheet-shaped material and a  
second connection portion in the proximity of a second end of the sheet-shaped material,  
wherein the first end overlaps the second end of the sleeve-like member after said bending.